## 2008/2009 APPLICATION INSTRUCTION GUIDE

## COMMERCIAL USE AUTHORIZATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



Dry Tortugas National Park
Attn: Chief Ranger's Office/Everglades National Park
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## **Instruction Guide**

## COMMERCIAL USE AUTHORIZATION

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

- (1) A maximum of 30 Commercial Use Authorizations ("CUAs") will be issued for commercial services appropriate to the purposes for which the Dry Tortugas National Park ("Park") was created, as set forth in its enabling legislation. CUA holders will be subject to established carrying capacity restrictions for the use of sites and areas within the Park.
- (2) Each CUA will be valid for only one commercial service. In addition, the CUA will apply to only one vessel.
- (3) An Applicant may apply for a CUA for each of the four approved commercial visitor services listed in Section II, below.

- (4) An Applicant may apply for more than one CUA per commercial service.
- (5) Each CUA is valid for no more than two calendar years. **Upon expiration, all CUA holders** wishing to provide CUA services in the Park will be required to re-apply and compete for a new CUA.
- (6) All commercial services provided under a CUA in this Park must originate and terminate outside of the Park boundaries.
- (7) CUA holders will be responsible for ensuring that their customers pay the per person entrance fee at Garden Key. CUA holders may enter into a separate fee agreement with the National Park Service ("NPS") authorizing them to collect the entrance fee for the Park in lieu of bringing their customers to Garden Key to pay the fee directly to the NPS. The CUA holder may be compensated for providing the fee collection service under the separate fee agreement.
- (8) The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that CUA services are provided to park visitors at reasonable rates and under appropriate operating conditions.
- (9) Non-profit organizations that will not be deriving taxable income from the activity are not required to obtain a CUA; however, the activity may require a issuance of an NPS Special Use Permit. (Please direct questions regarding non-profit status to the Chief Ranger's Office, Special Park Uses Program Manager at Everglades National Park. Contact information is provided in subsection X. (10), below.)
- (10) Permits/reservations for camping and visits to Loggerhead Key are not included in the CUA. These permits must be applied for on a trip-by-trip basis and are not guaranteed.

## II. APPROVED COMMERCIAL VISITOR SERVICES

Service Appendix Number	Service Description	Definitions/Requirements	Number of CUAs to be Issued
A	Guided Fishing Trips	<ul> <li>Guided fishing excursions</li> <li>One CUA per vessel</li> <li>Limit of 6 passengers per vessel</li> <li>Marine head(s) required on vessel</li> <li>May land passengers on Garden Key without advance reservation; use of dock is limited</li> <li>Other than the RNA* (Research Natural Area), e.g. the Garden Key Anchorage, vessels must anchor on sandy seabed</li> <li>Fishing prohibited in the RNA</li> <li>Vessel fishing license issued by the State of Florida</li> <li>State of Florida fishing regulations for Gulf Coast waters apply, except as superseded by special regulations (36 CFR 7.27)</li> <li>Catch may not be sold</li> </ul>	11

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В	Diving/Snorkeling Trips	<ul> <li>Supervised SCUBA diving and/or snorkeling</li> <li>One CUA per vessel</li> <li>Limit of 12 passengers per vessel</li> <li>Marine head(s) required on vessel</li> <li>May land passengers on Garden Key without advance</li> </ul>	9
		<ul> <li>reservation; use of dock is limited</li> <li>Other than the RNA* (Research Natural Area), e.g. the Garden Key Anchorage, vessels must anchor on sandy seabed</li> <li>Anchoring prohibited in RNA; must use mooring buoys in RNA once mooring buoys are installed</li> <li>See enclosed "Special Conditions for Dive</li> </ul>	
		Operations" for further requirements	
С	Wildlife Viewing	Watching/sightseeing wildlife activities	8
	Trips	One CUA per vessel	
		<ul><li>Marine head(s) required on vessel</li><li>May land passengers on Garden Key without advance</li></ul>	
		reservation; use of dock is limited	
		• Other than the <b>RNA*</b> ( <b>Research Natural Area</b> ), e.g.	
		the Garden Key anchorage, vessels must anchor on sandy seabed	
		Anchoring prohibited in RNA; must use mooring	
		buoys in RNA once mooring buoys are installed	
		Based on demand, days for landing on Loggerhead may be pre-assigned	
		Landings not permitted when islands are designated "closed" for wildlife/bird nesting	
D	Sailing Trips	Live-aboard sailing trip	2
		• One CUA per vessel	
		<ul><li>Limit of 20 to 25 visitors per trip</li><li>Marine head(s) required on vessel</li></ul>	
		May land passengers on Garden Key without advance	
		reservation; use of dock is limited	
		• Other than the RNA* (Research Natural Area), including the Garden Key Anchorage, vessels must	
		anchor on sandy seabed	
		In the RNA, must use mooring buoys (anchoring prohibited)	
		Must apply for separate CUAs if offering snorkel/SCUBA or fishing anywhere other than the designated anchorage of the Park	
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<sup>\*</sup> See enclosed map of Dry Tortugas National Park and its RNA in Section XI.

## III. COMMERICAL USE AUTHORIZATION PROCESS

- (1) **Complete the Application Package**. Complete, sign and date the Application Form; provide complete responses to the appropriate Supplemental Questions; include fee payment and other documents listed in Section VIII, below, as appropriate.
- (2) Mail completed Application Package, as described in (1), above. Completed Application Package must be received by Close of Business (4:30) ("COB") on November 30, 2007, to be eligible for the initial CUA qualification.

(3) **Multi-level NPS Qualification Process:** If more than the allowable number of applications is received for a given commercial service, the National Park Service (NPS) will process the CUA Application Packages in two stages in order to more fully address Park safety, resource protection, and quality of visitor experience.

The first stage of the evaluation process represents an initial qualification using the information provided in the Application Package to ensure that specific requirements (for each authorized commercial visitor service being applied for) are addressed and all of the required information has been provided. If an Applicant fails to timely submit a **complete** Application Package by COB on November 30, 2007, the NPS may reject the Application Package without further consideration. A checklist for submitting a complete Application Package is provided in Section VIII, below. The NPS will determine an Applicant's qualifications during the first stage of evaluation on a "pass/fail" basis.

An Applicant will be deemed qualified at this initial stage if the Applicant (a) provides all of the information and documentation required in the Application Package, i.e.: (i) a signed, completed Application Form; (ii) complete responses to the appropriate set of Supplemental Questions for the desired commercial service; and (iii) all appropriate documents listed in Section VIII of the CUA "Instruction Guide" (including a non-refundable check for \$250); and (b) the completed Application Package is received before COB on November 30, 2007.

If there are equal or fewer numbers of qualified applicants than the number of CUAs available for a given service, a CUA may be issued to each applicant the Superintendent determined is qualified during the initial stage of evaluation. If the number of qualified applicants resulting from the initial stage of evaluation exceeds the number of CUAs available for a given service, the NPS will perform a second qualification round. During this stage the Superintendent will rank the qualified applicants based on their responses to the Supplemental Questions. Each set of Supplemental Questions addresses the following equally weighted factors or criteria for determining an applicant's capability to provide safe, quality commercial services for park visitors with minimal impact on park resources:

- (a) Visitor Safety
- (b) Resource Protection
- (c) Applicant's Relevant Experience
- (d) Planned Visitor Experience
- (4) **Confirmation and Award**: All applications for a CUA will receive a response from the NPS. If the Application Package results in an award, the CUA will be mailed to the Applicant for signature and additional required documentation. *If the Applicant is not awarded a CUA, the Application/Administration Fee will not be returned.* (See Section VII, Fee Schedule).
- (5) Additional Reporting Requirements upon Issuance of the CUA:
  - (a) <u>Brochure</u> or online information site address showing how the commercial service to be conducted is described (if the CUA holder advertises the service). This information is to be submitted immediately after the CUA has been awarded. Any material changes in advertising materials must be forwarded to the NPS within 5 days of the change.
  - (b) <u>Guide Fishing Catch Logbook</u>: CUA holders for guide fishing will be provided catch logbooks. They will be required to submit **monthly** catch reports. Reports are due to the Park by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

(c) Annual Report: Each CUA holder will submit an Annual Report to the Park no later than **February 15** of each year, providing information for the preceding calendar year. The NPS will provide an Annual Report template for CUA holders to use for submitting this information.

## IV. APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

The explanations below correspond directly with the numbered items on the Application Form.

- (1) Give the legal name of your business. If you have a secondary name under which you are doing business (d.b.a.), please give that name also.
- (2) Check the box that identifies your type of business.
- (3) Provide contact information. Over the term of your authorization, it may be necessary to contact CUA holders to obtain or share information. This contact information is also published in the NPS Commercial Services Directory.
- (4) Provide your Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Social Security Number (SSN). This is a requirement of the 1996 Debt Collection Act. The EIN or SSN that you provide will be used as needed to collect debts.
- (5) Give the name(s) of persons designated as Authorized Agents for your business.
- (6) NPS Management Policy prohibits employees of the NPS and their spouses and minor children from acquiring or retaining any authorization conducting commercial services in a Park area.
- (7) Each authorization must be licensed by the appropriate city or county in which the primary business address and base of operation is located within the State of Florida. If you do not have a current Business License, please contact your local city or county government offices for further information and assistance. Provide a copy with your Application Package.
- (8) Provide names and titles of employees who will work in the Park under the authority of the CUA. These are usually mates/dive masters that are your employees (not contracted service). Use additional paper if needed. Please report any future changes to your list of employees by mailing an updated list, at least 7 days *prior* to any change of employees, to *Dry Tortugas National Park c/o Chief Ranger's Office, CUA, Everglades National Park 40001 SR 9336, Homestead, FL 33034.*
- (9) Describe the vessel that you intend to operate in the Park boundaries under the CUA.
- (10) Complete the appropriate set(s) of Supplemental Questions for the service(s) you wish to provide at the Park and attach your responses to the Application Form.
- (11) Provide a Current business credit report (within the last six months) from a major credit reporting company such as Equifax, Experien or Dun & Bradstreet.
- (12) Prospective Applicants should carefully examine the Application Package and fully inform themselves as to the conditions and matters that can in any way affect the authorized commercial services or the costs thereof. Should a prospective Applicant find discrepancies in or omissions from the Application Package or have questions about what information the NPS is requiring in the package, the Applicant should immediately notify the Special Park Uses Program Manager identified in subsection X (10) of the CUA "Instruction Guide" in writing, as soon as possible, but no later than November 23, 2007.

(13) Sign and date the Application Form. If the person signing the Application Form is an authorized agent for the business, proof of signing authority must accompany the Application Form. Package.

## V. GROUP SIZE LIMITS

Group size limits for each commercial service are shown in Section II, above.

## VI. INSURANCE AND THE MINIMUM AMOUNT REQUIRED

The CUA holder is required to maintain liability insurance naming the United States of America (National Park Service, Dry Tortugas National Park, c/o Everglades National Park, 40001 SR 9336, Homestead, FL 33034) as an additional insured at no less than the coverage amounts described below:

## (1) General Liability

Service Appendix Number	Service Description	Minimum per Occurrence Commercial General Liability Limits
A	Guide Fishing	\$300,000
В	Diving/Snorkeling	\$1,000,000
С	Wildlife Viewing	\$300,000
D	Sailing	
	1-10 customers	\$300,000
	11-15 customers	\$500,000
	16 or more	\$1,000,000

- (2) If the limit required by the State where the CUA holder is incorporated is higher than the limit listed above, the CUA holder will provide the higher level of coverage. The CUA holder will provide copies of the certificates of insurance to the Park with the required endorsement listing the United States of America (as noted above) as an additional insured before the CUA is issued.
- (3) Workers compensation coverage must be provided to eligible workers as required by applicable State law.
- (4) Coverage provided by insurance companies must meet the following minimum requirements:
  - (a) All insurers for all coverage's must be rated no lower than A- by the most recent edition of Best's Key Rating Guide (Property-Casualty edition).
  - (b) All insurers for all coverage's must have a Best's Financial Size Category of at least VIII according to the most recent edition of Best's Key Rating Guide (Property-Casualty edition).
  - (c) All insurers must be admitted (licensed) in the State in which the CUA holder is domiciled.
- (5) The CUA requires the holder to assume liability for and agree to save, hold harmless, protect, defend and indemnify the United States of America, its agents and employees, for and against any and all liabilities, obligations, losses, damages or judgments (including, without limitation, attorney and expert fees) of any kind and nature whatsoever on account of fire or other peril, bodily injury, death or property damage, or claims for bodily injury, death or property damage of any nature whatsoever, and by whomever made, in any way connected with or arising out of the activities of the entity, its employees, agents, or contractors, under the CUA.

## VII. <u>FEE SCHEDULE</u>

The authority for the NPS to recover costs associated with management and administration of a CUA is found in 16 U.S.C. § 5966 (b) (2) (A). This law requires the NPS to charge a reasonable fee for the issuance of a commercial use authorization in order to recover associated management and administrative costs.

- (1) **Administrative Fee** is based on costs associated with processing and evaluating Application Packages. Payment of this fee must be included with the Application Package. This fee is non-refundable and non-returnable.
- (2) **Management/Monitoring Fee** is charged based on the actual costs incurred by all Park divisions involved in monitoring, supporting or cleaning up and restoring park areas after the use by the CUA holder. This fee is paid on an annual basis and may range from \$100.00 to \$250.00 per year, based upon the actual number of CUA trips to the Park and the actual costs incurred by the Park.
  - **Buoy Maintenance Fee** is charged (in addition to the Management/Monitoring Fee) to cover the NPS's costs in providing and maintaining mooring buoys used exclusively by CUA holders. This fee is paid on an annual basis and will be implemented on a pro-rata basis once mooring buoys are in place.
- (3) The following fees are in effect at Dry Tortugas National Park (although Buoy Maintenance Fees will not be implemented until buoys are installed):
  - (1) Administrative Fee \$250.00 per CUA (non-refundable)
  - (2) Management/Monitoring Fee: \$100.00 to \$250.00 per year

Buoy Maintenance Fee: Dive Operation = \$1275.00 per year Buoy Maintenance Fee Wildlife Viewing = \$310.00 per year

## VIII. APPLICATION PACKAGE CHECK LIST

A complete Application Package must include an original check and copies of the other documents listed below. All are required unless a specific document is not applicable to the commercial service you wish to provide:

- o Application Form (completed, signed and dated)
- o Supplemental Questions
- U.S. Coast Guard Captain's License (Operator of Uninspected Passenger Vessels (OUPV) or higher for all vessel operators)
- Certificate of Inspection, if applicable
- County Occupational License
- o State of Florida Vessel Registration for a commercial vessel
- o Vessel Fishing License, as applicable
- SCUBA certificates, as applicable

- CPR/1<sup>st</sup> Aid/AED certificates (For SCUBA operators, also include O<sub>2</sub> Administration certificate)
- o \$250.00 (non-refundable) Application Fee

REMINDER: Please write your Employer Identification Number on your check.

## Documents and fee payments should be mailed to:

Dry Tortugas National Park CUA Program Chief Ranger's Office Everglades National Park 40001 SR 9336 Homestead, FL 33034

# IX. DOCUMENTS TO BE PROVIDED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CUA HAS BEEN AWARDED BUT PRIOR TO EFFECTIVE DATE

- (1) Insurance certificate showing the NPS as additionally insured, as described in Section VI, above.
- (2) Brochure or online information site address showing how the activity is described and conducted (if the CUA holder advertises the commercial service), as discussed in subsection III, (5), above .

## X. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## (1) What is a "Commercial Use Authorization"?

Section 418 of the National Parks Omnibus Management Act of 1998, Public Law 105–391; 16 U.S.C. § 5966 (a), authorizes (but does not require) the NPS, upon request, to issue commercial use authorizations (CUAs) to persons (referring to individuals, corporations and other entities) to provide commercial services to Park area visitors in limited circumstances. CUAs, although used to authorize commercial services to Park area visitors, are not concession contracts and are not transferable.

CUAs are intended to provide a simple means to authorize the provision of suitable commercial services to visitors in Park areas. The CUA legislation contains limited circumstances in that commercial services (1) do not use fixed commercial facilities within a National Park unit, (2) the commercial activity originates and terminates outside the Park area, (3) no money changes hands on Park lands, including park waters, and (4) no commercial solicitation occurs on Park lands, including park waters.

## (2) What will be the term of this authorization?

CUA are issued for a term of up to two years.

#### (3) What is a "Commercial Visitor Service"?

This type of service is one that (1) is determined to be an appropriate use of the park; (2) will have minimal impact on park resources and values; and (3) is consistent with the purpose for

which the park was established, as well as all applicable management plans and park policies and regulations.

#### (4) How long does it take to process my application?

The time to process an application may vary and can take-up to 45 days. Submitting a complete packet greatly aids the NPS in assessing your application and issuing your authorization in a timely manner.

## (5) Is sub-contracting allowed under the authorization?

The National Park Service does not allow subcontracting under CUAs.

## (6) May authorization be transferred between companies, individuals, or entities?

Authorizations cannot be transferred between companies, individuals, or entities.

## (7) Is there a preferential right for renewal of a CUA?

There is no preferential right for renewal of a CUA. Upon expiration, all CUA holders wishing to provide CUA services in the Park will be required to re-apply and compete for a new CUA.

## (8) What type of insurance is required before this authorization can be approved?

The CUA must provide commercial general liability insurance against claims arising out of or resulting from the acts or omissions of the CUA holder or the CUA holder's employees, agents, or contractors, in carrying out the activities and operations required and/or authorized under the authorization. The Park must receive verification of commercial general liability (and transportation insurance, if applicable) coverage before a CUA can be issued and the coverage must be maintained as current during the term of the authorization. See Section V for more information about insurance requirements.

#### IMPORTANT:

The name on the certificate of insurance must match your individual or business name, including any names used under "doing business as".

## (9) What are the requirements during the second year of a two-year authorization?

CUA holders with two-year authorizations must meet the following requirements **BEFORE** starting the second year of operations:

- (a) Provide the NPS with proof of current insurance that the NPS has determined is commensurate with the risk involved and the scope and size of the activities;
- (b) Be in compliance with all terms and conditions of the CUA for the previous year including past-year reporting requirements;
- (c) Be current on all fees;
- (d) Meet all State, Federal and other agency requirements relating to your operation Vessel Registration and State Business License; and
- (e) Provide an updated list of employees.

#### (10) Whom can I contact if I have further questions about CUAs or the CUA process?

Questions should be directed to the Special Park Uses Program Manager. This position is currently held by Ms. Skaidra Kempkowski, located in the Chief Ranger's Office at Everglades National Park. Ms. Kempkowski can be contacted by phone at 305/242-7732. Her e-mail address is Skaidra\_Kempkowski @nps.gov

Information can be mailed to: Dry Tortugas National Park CUA Program

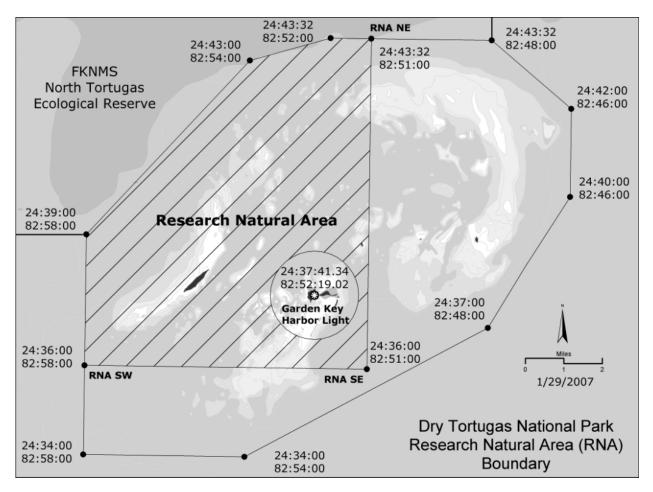
c/o Everglades National Park/Chief Ranger's Office

40001 SR 9336

Homestead, FL 33034

The Chief Ranger's Office phone number is: 305/242-7730

## XI. Map of Dry Tortugas National Park with Research Natural Area boundaries



#### XII. SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR **DIVE OPERATIONS**

- a. The CUA Holder shall ensure that all SCUBA diving activities conducted within Dry Tortugas National Park are supervised by an individual at the nationally certified level of "Divemaster" or higher, who maintains a log of each diver's bottom time and maximum depth.
- b. The CUA Holder shall ensure that all employees and patrons who participate in SCUBA diving activities possess a valid SCUBA Diving Certification from a nationally recognized certifying agency.
- c. All divers must carry a whistle (or other noise alert device) and a 'safety sausage'. If divers providing their own gear do not own such equipment, whistles and safety sausages will be provided by the CUA Holder for a fee.
- d. To protect natural resources, no divers will be permitted to wear dive gloves.
- e. All divers must be paired with a buddy. Odd number groups may contain one three-buddy group. No solo diving will be permitted, regardless of certification.
- f. Concessioner staff will review safe diving procedures, including underwater and surface safety signals, before diving. Concessioner staff will identify boat equipment and explain safe water entry/exit procedures for the vessel.
- g. The CUA Holder shall ensure that employees are knowledgeable of SCUBA diving equipment, compressor operation and the handling of high pressure cylinders. Service records for compressors shall be maintained and made available for inspection. The CUA Holder shall ensure that all diving cylinders utilized have current VIP and hydro certifications.
- h. The air quality must meet grade "E" standards as defined by the Congress Gas Association (CGA). The air fill station must be inspected twice a year or as required by law to ensure proper air quality. Air bank tanks are to be hydrostatically tested every 10 years as evidenced by testing date stamps. The air fill station must have the proper oil/water separator and air filter (multi-sorb) in place, and should be replaced after every 200 hours of operation.
- i. The CUA Holder shall draft a **Diving Accident Emergency Plan** for NPS review which shall be submitted before providing diving commercial services under the CUA. Furthermore, the CUA Holder shall ensure that recognized safe recreational diving practices are adhered to by employees and patrons. Knowingly tolerating unsafe diving practices will be sufficient grounds for revocation of this CUA.
- j. The CUA Holder shall ensure that vessels fly the "Divers Down" or International "ALPHA" flag while conducting diving or snorkeling activities. The flag is to be lowered when diving activities are completed.

- k. The CUA Holder shall ensure that each vessel is equipped with a First Aid Kit and that dive boats carry a minimum supply of 1300 liters of emergency oxygen (3,000 liters recommended) with the equipment necessary to deliver 100% oxygen (minimum of two hours at 15 liters per minute) and that an individual certified in Standard First Aid, CPR and Oxygen Administration is available on all diving trips.
- The CUA Holder shall ensure that its employees are knowledgeable of the Park and its underwater resources. All visitors shall receive a Park approved interpretive resource message immediately prior to beginning any diving and/or snorkeling activity. In order to ensure that the interpretive and educational quality of the service authorized herein is acceptable to the National Park Service, the Superintendent reserves the right to review such services.
- m. Where anchoring is permitted in the park, the CUA Holder shall ensure that vessels anchor in such a manner so as to prevent damage to coral and sea grass beds. The vessel operator is liable for any damage to submerged natural or cultural resources resulting from anchoring or vessel operation.
- n. The CUA Holder shall ensure that patrons avoid damage to natural and cultural features through handling, kicking, or striking with diving gear or dangling gauges.
- o. The CUA Holder and its employees will adhere to all regulations and policies of the Park and will ensure to the maximum extent possible that their patrons adhere to the same Park regulations and policies. The CUA Holder shall obtain a copy of Park regulations from the Superintendent upon execution of this CUA.
- p. Spearfishing is not permitted inside the Park. The CUA Holder will ensure that all spearguns, Hawaiian slings, gigs, etc. are broken down and stored below decks before entering the Park.
- q. All shipwrecks within the Park are protected. The CUA Holder shall ensure that patrons do not touch, remove, damage or disturb any archeological and cultural resources or artifacts.
- r. The CUA Holder shall ensure that all employees are in sufficient physical condition to perform the services authorized.
- s. Required Documents. The following documents are required to be kept on-board each dive tour boat and made available for inspection upon request by the NPS or other appropriate authorities at all times during diving trips conducted by the CUA Holder.
  - i. Written established procedures for handling emergencies.
  - ii. A listing of all divers on board showing certifying organization.
- t. The CUA Holder may use the Garden Key dock between sunrise and sunset for the express purpose of loading and unloading Park visitors and gear when the docks are not

in use by the NPS and/or concessioner ferry boats. Tie-up time on the dock is limited to **two** hours.

- u. The CUA Holder shall not load or off-load passengers and/or their equipment and supplies at any location other than the dock at Garden Key, without prior approval of the Park Site Manager.
- v. Loggerhead Key dock is closed to public use.
- w. Any incident/accident occurring aboard the CUA Holder's vessel en route to or from the Park boundary must be reported. The CUA Holder is required to submit, within 60 days, a written report to the Superintendent, of any incidents/accidents involving the safety or well being of the CUA Holder patrons.

I have reviewed these Special Conditions for Dive Operations in Dry Tortugas National Park and agree to comply with said conditions.

CUA Holder Signature	DATE